

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IS
SUBJECT: U.S.- ISRAELI RELATIONS

1. IN A CONVERSATION APRIL 19 AMOS EIRAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, EXPRESSED TO ME CONCERN THAT WHAT HE SEES AS A POSSIBLE EROSION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ISRAEL. EVENTUALLY THIS COULD LEAD TO A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, HE THOUGHT. EIRAN DID NOT WANT TO PIN THIS CONCERN TO ANY ONE EVENT BUT SAID THERE HAD BEEN A SERIES OF EVENTS AND STATEMENTS IN RECENT MONTHS WHICH LED HIM TO CONCLUDE THAT THE HITHERTO VERY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP MAY BE IN DANGER OF BECOMING TROUBLED.

2. FURTHER CONVERSATION BROUGHT OUT THAT WHAT REALLY CONCERNED EIRAN WAS THE POSSIBILITY OF ISRAEL BEING FACED BY THE U.S. WITH PEACE PROPOSALS IT COULD NOT ACCEPT. IF THAT WERE THE CASE, HE SAID, IT WOULD LEAD TO WHAT HE CALLED A "WALL TO WALL" GOVERNMENT IN ISRAEL, I.E., A COALITION OF LABOR AND THE LIKUD. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES ALL ELEMENTS OF ISRAELI SOCIETY WOULD HARDEN INTO MORE HAWKISH POSITIONS, HE PREDICTED. THE U.S. MUST CONTINUE TO BE A MEDIATOR AND CONCILIATOR BETWEEN THE ARABS AND THE ISRAELIS, NOT AN ARBITRATOR. AND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEL AV 02753 191658Z

"NO SURPRISES, PLEASE," HE SAID.

3. I ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT PERES WOULD COME UP WITH A PLAN OF HIS OWN. EIRAN DID NOT SEE ANY SPECIFIC "PERES PLAN" IN THE OFFING, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT ENTIRELY RULE IT OUT. PERES IS A MAN WHO CHANGES HIS MIND MORE FREQUENTLY THAN RABIN, EIRAN SAID. BUT ANY ISRAELI PLAN

WOULD BE BUILT AROUND THE PROPOSITION OF WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORY ONLY IN EXCHANGE FOR WHAT THE MAN IN THE STREET COULD CONSIDER "PEACE".

4. EIRAN SAID HE PERSONALLY IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF REACHING AN OVERALL AGREEMENT THIS YEAR. HE DOES FORSEE THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER INTERIM AGREEMENTS, BUT THAT IS ABOUT AS FAR AS HE BELIEVES ISRAEL WOULD BE PREPARED TO GO. EVEN A TRIP TO GENEVA WOULD PROBABLY NOT RESULT IN MUCH MORE THAN INTERIM MEASURES. THIS TIME THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE MORE OR LESS SIMULTANEOUS MOVEMENT ON BOTH THE EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN FRONTS IN ARRANGING AGREEMENTS; HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING OF AN INTERIM NATURE WOULD BE POSSIBLE ON THE WEST BANK.

5. COMMENT: EIRAN HAS BEEN, OF COURSE, A VERY CLOSE ADVISER TO RABIN AND IT IS LIKELY THAT THE MESSAGE HE CONVEYED, VAGUE AS IT IS, HAS THE PRIME MINISTER'S SANCTION. THREE TIMES HE REPEATED: WE MUST BE CAREFUL THAT RELATIONS DON'T DETERIORATE. EIRAN WILL BE LEAVING GOVERNMENT SHORTLY, AND SAID THAT HE WILL SPECIALIZE IN U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS AS A LECTURER, WRITER AND PROFESSOR (HE ALREADY TEACHES A COURSE ON U.S. POLITICAL SCIENCE AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY). HIS "WALL TO WALL" SCENARIO WOULD APPEAR TO BE MORE AN EFFORT TO MODERATE ANTICIPATED U.S. DEMANDS ON ISRAEL RATHER THAN A SERIOUS FORECAST OF SUCH A COALITION POSSIBILITY.

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 02753 191658Z

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